

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A voice generator for generating voice corresponding to a text item, comprising:
 - means for translating an original text item to be converted into voice into a new text item by replacing a first language character or string included in the original text item and not included in a second language with a second language character or string having a pronunciation equivalent or similar to the pronunciation of the first language character or string; and
 - means for generating voice by pronouncing the new text item according to the pronunciation of the second language.
2. The voice generator according to claim 1, wherein the original text item comprises place name text items assigned to respective places.
3. The voice generator according to claim 1, wherein the first language character or string and the second language character or string are included in a place name text item representing a place name.
4. The voice generator according to claim 1, wherein the first language character or string is in French and the second language character or string is in English.
5. The voice generator according to claim 1, wherein the first language character or string is in Spanish and the second language character or string is in English.
6. The voice generator according to claim 1, wherein the first language character or string is in German and the second language character or string is in English.

7. A voice generator for generating voice corresponding to a text item, comprising:

means for translating an abbreviated original text item to be converted into voice into a new text item by replacing a first language character or string included in a full original text item and not included in a second language with a second language character or string having a pronunciation equivalent or similar to the pronunciation of the first language character or string; and

means for generating voice by pronouncing the new text item according to the pronunciation of the second language.

8. The voice generator according to claim 7, wherein the first language character or string is in French and the second language character or string is in English.

9. The voice generator according to claim 7, wherein the first language character or string is in Spanish and the second language character or string is in English.

10. The voice generator according to claim 7, wherein the first language character or string is in German and the second language character or string is in English.

11. A method for generating voice corresponding to a text item, comprising:

translating an original text item to be converted into voice into a new text item by replacing a first language character or string included in the original text item and not included in a second language with a second language character or string having a pronunciation equivalent or similar to the pronunciation of the first language character or string; and

generating voice by pronouncing the new text item according to the pronunciation of the second language.

12. The method for generating voice according to claim 11, wherein the first language character or string and the second language character or string are included in a place name text item representing a place name.

13. The method for generating voice according to claim 12, wherein the first language character or string is in French and the second language character or string is in English.

14. The method for generating voice according to claim 12, wherein the first language character or string is in Spanish and the second language character or string is in English.

15. The method for generating voice according to claim 12, wherein the first language character or string is in German and the second language character or string is in English.

16. A navigation apparatus for guiding users, comprising:
a map database for storing geographic information containing a place name text item representing each place name;
means for reading out the place name text item from the map database;
means for translating the place name text item into a new text item by replacing a first language character or string included in the place name text item and not included in a second language with a second language character or string having a pronunciation equivalent or similar to the pronunciation of the first language character or string; and
means for generating voice by pronouncing the new text item according to the pronunciation of the second language.